

# Chaucer's Whims:

Being some Select

FABLES and TALES

In Verse,

Very Applicable to the

*PRESENT TIMES;*

Under these following Heads: *Viz.*

The Succession.

The Convocation.

The Non-juring  
Clergyman.

Jack of both sides.

The Triumvirate.

Justice Mistaken.

The Ken. Petition

The True-born-En-  
glishman.

Trade and Empire  
Inconsistent.

One that Sh——t  
in his Hat, &c.

The Musick-Prize.

The Impeachment.

L O N D O N:

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# THE PREFACE.

**R**eflections upon the Common Occurrences of Life are so very necessary, and a Review of what is past, of so instructive a Nature, That I could not but think it advantageous to the Publick, to employ a Vacant Hour or two for its Entertainment, as well as its Edification.

Tales and Fables have hitherto been look'd upon as things worthy of a Common Reception, especially where Humane Transactions are aim'd at under the Persons of Irrational Creatures; and a Moral directs us into a Sense of Affairs which the Dread of Authority would deter some People from enquiring into, Would the Law take hold of the Discourse of Birds and Beasts, or Men of High Stations be offended at being told their Faults in order to amend 'em, when  
the

# P R E F A C E.

*the Rebuke is couched under a Diverting Story. If I have not done Justice to Chaucer, by putting his Name to Fables and Stories, which are Collected by another Hand; I have several Precedents to excuse me, and if I have reminded the Reader of some things of Importance, which otherwise might have escap'd his Memory, I ought to have his Thanks for the Design, though I probably may deserve none for my Failure in some part of the Performance.*

---

Chaucer

# Chaucer's WHIMS.

## *The Succession.*

**I**N Times of old, when Beasts were wondrous wise,  
 And Birds had thoughtful Heads and piercing  
 The first in Consultation gravely sate (Eyes,  
 To remedy the Grievances of State,  
 And find out Means and Ways, and study laws,  
 To serve their Monarch and Assert his Cause.  
 The Royal Brute, who then the Scepter sway'd,  
 And had possess'd the Forrest for his Aid,  
 Well knowing that in Kings it was a Crime,  
 To look no farther than their Reigning time,

Sagely propos'd a Successor, for fear

His Majesty should die without an Heir,

And his poor helpless Subjects be undone

By any other Worship than his own.

Please you, my Sovereign Liege, *Don Reynard* cry'd,

Kings should be Kings, whatever Priest's their Guide,

And if the Fates decree that you must fall,

And Childless yield to Death's Imperious Call;

Oh! may these Realms the Next in Blood obey,

And let a *Lybian* Prince o're *Lybia* sway;

No Foreign Lion mount the Regal Throne,

To give us Statutes modell'd from his own.

Yonder there lies in the *Nemean* Wood,

A Graceful Cub, and sprung from Royal Blood,

Immediate in Descent, as some can prove,

Not Cousin by a third or fourth remove.

Suppose the Father's Conscience is deny'd,

Where

Where are the Spots that stick upon the Child?  
 His Soul's unblemish'd, as His Birth is true,  
 And renders Him a Successor for You.  
 But, said the King, my Friend, the Laws Ordain,  
 That only Beasts of *Lybia's* Faith should reign,  
 That Orthodoxly through the Forrest range,  
 And yield to no Religion that is strange.  
 Nay then, reply'd the *Fox*, it is agreed,  
 Your Cousin *German* Wolf can ne're succeed;  
 The Monarchy must die at your Decease,  
 And from your Life alone does hold its Lease,  
 Since it must be acknowledg'd as His due,  
 If His Faith's false, t'others can ne're be true;  
 And if His Plea that Urges Tyes of Blood,  
 And Princ'ples more like ours, be not good,  
 The *Wolf* of course should drop his empty Claim,  
 And cease Pretensions to the Regal Name,  
 As he Confess'd his Title too remote,  
 And own'd the *Lion's* Birth deserv'd, the casting Vote.

## M O R A L.

*Fly, fly from Rome, the S—te cry's,*

*If you would save your Throats;*

*And if you'd be reputed wise,*

*For Luther give your Votes,*

*When 'tis allow'd both far and near,*

*And known in every Nation,*

*That no such Persecutors are,*

*As Men of that Persuasion.*

*But H—r design's, it seems*

*To turn a Profelyte,*

*And so perhaps would little J—s,*

*Had he 3 Crowns in sight.*

*We might have then consider'd first,*

*Before the Bill was hit on,*

*Which of the Two deserv'd that Trust,*

*The German or the Briton.*

*The Convocation.*

**T**HE King of Birds a Senate held,  
 And Deputies were chose,  
 Of ev'ry Kind, to take the Field,  
 Except the Canting Crows.

At this a Black-coat storm'd and swore,  
 And in an angry Fit,  
 Publish'd Quotations o're and o're  
 To prove their right to sit.

When at the last they gain'd the Chair,  
 After much Toil and Pains,  
 That they should also take their Place,  
 And shew their want of Brains.

But separately from those whose Care,  
 Was to defend the Nation,  
 And keep the People of the Air  
 Secure from Beasts Invasion.

They met, and met again, to find  
 The Cause that brought 'em thither,  
 For not a Soul amidst the Kind  
 Knew why they came together.  
 As all they did from day to day,  
 At this Religious meeting,  
 Was to kneel down, and gravely pray,  
 Adjourn, and fall a Eating.  
 Till Fortune flung 'em a Debate  
 About the Rights of Kings,  
 And busied 'em with Affairs of State  
 Instead of Holy things.  
 The Sovereign strait was all surprize,  
 To see the Rebels live,  
 That durst audaciously despise  
 His high Prerogative.  
 And fix'd his Talons with intent  
 To make a Common Slaughter,  
 And murder Foes of Government,  
 That dar'd propose the Matter.

But

But he recall'd his Rage, and cry'd,

Such Fools as these deserve

All to be punish'd for their Pride,

And without *Living*s starve.

I might indeed Just Vengeance take,

While they my Rights oppose,

But I this Observation make,

An *Eagle's* Birth's above a *Crow's*.

## M O R A L.

*A Man of any Sense may find*

*The Moral of this Fable,*

*And judge the Crows the Sneaking Kind,*

*That Cringe and Bless the Table.*

*And by the Eagle's understood*

*A Prince that Rules a Nation,*

*And study's every thing he shou'd,*

*That's Master of Discretion.*

*As for the Mutineers, 'tis known,*

*By every Christian Brother,*

*The Saints that can one King dethrone,*

*May fall off from another.*

*The*

*The Non-Juring Clergyman.*

**C**Ry'd a Jolly fat Parson that could not subscribe,  
 Like the rest of the Turn-coat *Levitical* Tribe.  
 If I must be turn'd out and my Living sequestred,  
 For the sake of my *Conscience*, that else wou'd be fester'd,  
 Woe betide the *Subscribers*, their *Children* and *Wives*,  
 This Action shall cost 'em five hundred *Folk* Lives.  
 An Informer stood by, and took hold of the Sentence,  
 Resolving to bring him to Stool of Repentance,  
 And immediately dragg'd him to Court, to reveal  
 What he meant by his *threatning* the good *Commonweal*.  
 Old Oliver ask'd him in the Name of the Lord,  
 To speak the whole *Truth* to the *Saints* at the Board.  
 When he bluntly reply'd in an unconcern'd strain,  
 My Lords, I've a Wife and a Child to maintain,  
 And if I'm not suffer'd to Preach and get Bread  
 By that way of Life which I've hitherto led:  
 To be plain with your L<sup>ds</sup>, I must *em* commence Quack  
 To provide 'em some *Physicks* and *Cloths* to their back.

Since I with your *Covenants* and *Oaths* am perplex'd  
 And a *PILL* can do ten times more *Harm* than a *Text*.

## M O R A L

*Could English Counsellors advise*

*Their Kings, for England's Good,  
 And most impartially wise,  
 Their Fellow Subject's Welfare prize,  
 As good Advisers should.*

*They had giv'n Counsel to dispence,*

*With Levi's Sacred Race,*

*And since to Swear, was in their Sense  
 To give Religion an Offense,*

*Let each have kept his Place,*

*Then had they only preach'd and pray'd,*

*And Parish Business done;*

*Not taken to another Trade,*

*And Libell'd Governments for Bread,*

*To overturn the Throne.*

*Jack of Both Sides.*

**W**hen *Anthony* against *Cesar* rose,  
 And *Romans* were the *Roman* Foes,

A certain Tradesman to provide  
 For his own self, if either side  
 Should get the Better, and assume

The Empire of the World and *Rome*.

Two *Parrots* taught to stretch their Throats  
 To different Sense, and different Notes.

*Long live Antonius*, this wou'd cry,

This, let *Augustus* never die,

Till *Cesar's* Arms Victorious grown,

Confirm'd and fix'd him in the Throne,

As the Sage Man of *Art* enjoy'd

That by one Bird which t'other had destroy'd.

( II )

M O R A L.

*How many P——s have done the same,*

*As this poor Man has done!*

*And tho' he stood by James his Claim,*

*For William's sent his Son:*

*Wisely to save what both might lose,*

*If both should take one side,*

*And so their Consciences abuse*

*To gratifie their Pride:*

*But what is Conscience when Estate*

*And Titles lie a bleeding?*

*Shou'd either have the better Fate,*

*They'r safe by this Proceeding.*

*The*

*The Triumvirate.*

**A** *Leopard* chosen to a Throne  
For want of Issue Royal,

A *Stag* was sent to make it known,  
And tell him how the Beasts wou'd own  
Him King without Denial.

Accordingly to give a tast  
Of good true Forrest Breeding,

*Browantler* summon'd all his host,

To get Credentials quickly pass'd,  
And Equipage exceeding.

Amongst the rest he wisely took

An Ape for his Companion,

With a grave Ass that wrote a Book

And had a Sanctimonious look

With Heart of a Socinian.

And as they jogg'd along the Road

By one anothers side,

A Goat, who thought a fight so odd  
 Could to the Beasts no Credit bode,  
 Made this Complaint and cry'd.

Could not our Sov'raign Lord have found  
 Amidst the Brutal Herd,

Three Beasts of Intellectuals found,  
 For Probity and Truth renown'd,  
 But these must be preferr'd?

The Prince they'r sent to, needs must take  
 Affront, at what's design'd,

And seeing them, this Judgment make,

A C——d, Deist, and a Rake

Are Chief of all our Kind;

And rather than accept the Crown

Of Kingdoms which is sent him,

Will keep those Lands that are his own,

And range within 'em up and down,

Not take what may repent him.

## MORAL.

*Any man in his Senses from hence may conclude,  
 That Ambassadors ought to be wise and be good,  
 Not M——d-like first, cry Whore at their Wives,  
 Or rake it like M——n, and take honest Mens Lives,  
 Not banter like T——d the Scriptural Writ,  
 And venture Damnation for appearance of Wit.  
 Such a Leesh of true Protestants never was known,  
 That are gone to Bestow what is none of their own ;  
 Would the Prince be directed by these as Instructors,  
 No occasion for Teachers, or Chaplains, or Doctors :  
 The first would advise a Divorce for his Spouse,  
 And the second give Precepts to govern his House,  
 As the last play'd his part by debauching his Conscience,  
 And for honest plain Truth, taught him Falshood and  
 (Nonsense)*

*Justice*

*Justice mistaken.*

**A** Dolphin once had an Intent,  
 To visit Parts remote,  
 And left his watry Government  
 To his Officers of Note:

Who wisely laid their Heads to make  
 Advantage of their Place,  
 And for their own, not Master's sake,  
 Direct the Finny Race.

When, one amongst the rest that knew  
 The sweets of flowing gain,  
 And give the very Devil his due,  
 Had plundred o're the Main.

Propos'd a *Shark* to scour about,  
 By virtue of Commission,  
 And rob the Fishes he found out  
 Of whatsoe'er Condition.

The *Shark* for his part Gutt'd all  
 He met within the Ocean,  
 And rifled 'em both great and small,  
 In answer to his Master's motion.

However, at long Run, the Thief  
 Was at his Practice caught,  
 And sent to Prison with belief,  
 His Masters would excuse his Fault.

But they petition'd hard and fast  
 The Royal Fish to try him,  
 And send him out of the way in haste  
 Instead of standing by him.

Woe's me the credulous Prisoner cry'd,  
 That I could e're depend,  
 Or think a Courtier on my side  
 Or Sycophant my Friend.

Thus, the Poor Felon ever fares  
 While Thieves of greatness reign,  
 The Pleasure and the Profit's theirs.  
 But mine's alone the Plain.

## M O R A L.

*Some certain Great People that sit at the stern  
 As Directors of State, from this Fable may learn,  
 That it squints at a business that feign would be bid,  
 And the Shark's the resemblance of poor Cpt. K——d  
 Whom the Dolphin's Chief Fav'rites point at, may be known,  
 If by other Folks Actions they examine their own,  
 All I say to the Matter is that its a Crime  
 Four caught in one Theft are not hang'd at a time,*

*The Kentish Petitioners.*

**T**HE Chief of the *Brutes* were all met to prevent  
 Any danger from sudden Invasion,  
 As the Woods and the Fields Representatives sent,  
 To consult for the good of the Nation (Rate,  
 When the *Boars* and the *Wolves*, and the *Beasts* of first  
 Gave their *Votes* to give *Neighbours* Assistance,  
 And wisely resolv'd without any Debate,

D

To

To keep off the War at a distance. (Words  
Since their Enemies that were, had all giv'n 'em their

That Hostilities ever should cease,

And nothing seem'd coveted more by the Birds

Than the joys of strict Friendship and Peace.

But a parcel of idle, blind, ignorant Moles

Whose Sculls were as dark as their Sight,

Would needs give their Judgment, and creep'd from their

And cry'd to the Fight, to the Fight. (Holes

Else the Nation's undone, and all Commerce and Trade,

Is eternally ruin'd of course,

Then Sirs its our thought there's no more to be said

But to open our Hearts and our Purse.

A Fig for Addreses, when Bills of Supplies

Are the only things proper to save us,

Since a Person that either has Brains or has Eyes,

May foresee that the Birds would enslave us.

Where

Wherefore 'tis but fitting that we that have made you,

The Dons of the Land that you are, (you,  
Should come from our Homes to advise and upbraid

For not speaking up for a War.

Hey day cry'd a Mastiff a Member of note,

By my Soul it is worth Observation,

To see how these Sots that are not worth a Groat,

Would Beggar the rest of the Nation.

The People 'tis true made us Chiefs by their voice,

But does that make the People above us,

Who'r entitl'd their Masters from their own *Act* and

As Electors themselves must approve us? (choice,

Away with the Scoundrel Advisers to Prison

That of Enmity stir up the Coals,

For believe me 'tis nothing but Justice and Reason

That *Darkness* is chosen for *Moles*.

## M O R A L.

*Five Wisemen of Kent are design'd by this story  
 To lay down the Sin of Imprudence before ye,  
 They gravely sat up for Political Creatures, (ters,  
 And prescrib'd ways and means and Advise for their Bet-  
 When 'twas found by th' Event, and succeeding Disasters,  
 Those men they call Servants were too hard for their Masters,  
 And there lies a strong Place not far from the Stadt-House,  
 Which has Med'cines for Madmen and Fools, call'd the  
 (Gate-house.*

*The True-born Englishman.*

**A** Dispute once arose 'twixt an *Ass* and a *Mule*,  
 Who deserv'd the right hand, and was fittest to  
 [rule.

Said the first, the Precedence from birth-right I claim,  
 Since my Fathers and Mothers Descent is the same.

And

And I'm sprung from the Loyns of a worshipful Pair,  
 That can witness my title to be lawful and fair;  
 As from beasts of one Species they'l prove me brought  
 [forth,

Not a mixture of Creatures to lessen my worth.

When thou a poor Devil as ever was born,  
 Art the jest of the Fields, and the Forrester's scorn;  
 From deriving thy birth from a couple of Brutes,  
 Whose name, nor whose nature with each other suits.  
 As the Horse's blood renders ignoble thy Race,  
 And takes off from the Fame got by that of the *Ass*.  
 Prithee Friend, cry'd the *Mule*; hold thy insolent  
 [tongue,

Thou'rt a Fool, not to find out thy self in the wrong.  
 The plea thou mak'st use of, confounds thee of course;  
 Since an *Ass* 'tis well known, must give place to a  
 [Horse.

And it's more to my Credit, to be so near allied,  
 To a Beast that has honour and birth of his side,  
 Than that both my Parents should have been of thy  
 [kind,

And bequeath'd me nor Beauties of Body nor Mind.

MO-

## M O R A L.

Look on this Land that makes her boast,  
 A certain Author cries ;  
 Her Sons are Mongrels at the most,  
 Whom none for Birth can prize.  
 Saxons and Danes, and Normans won  
 This Kingdom by the Sword,  
 And every English Mother's Son's  
 A Bastard on his Word.  
 When by their Conquests we became  
 A wise and powerful Nation ;  
 And learn'd from them the search of Fame,  
 And Methods of Discretion.  
 Else had we still continued rude,  
 And of unpolish'd Natures,  
 Had not their Arts our Ignorance subdu'd,  
 And Union made us Nobler Creatures.

*Trade and Empire inconsistent.*

**A**S *Cæsar* stood upon the Strand,  
To take the Morning Air,

He saw a Ship make towards Land,

All beautiful and fair:

Her bulk and stateliness of frame,

Soon made His Majesty

Ask whence the lovely Vessel came,

That thus adorn'd the Sea?

Answer was made, his Queen alone

Was Mistress of her Lading;

That Ship and Rigging was her own,

On the account of Trading.

The King could not his anger hide,

Or just Resentments masque,

But homewards went, and took his Bride

After this way to task.

Præter

Prithee my Dear, observe and see

The poorness of my State ;

And to what infamous degree

I'm brought from Regal height.

I thought my self a Sovereign King,

Once o'er the World obey'd,

But now I find I'm no such thing.

But a *Muck-worm* of *Trade*.

For shame, let Royal blood disdain

A Calling that's so mean,

That I once more o'er *Rome* may *Reign*,

And you be call'd a *Queen*.

## M O R A L.

*To see a Royal Name set down*

*Amidst Subscribers Books,*

*Does no great Honour to a Crown,*

*But derogates from its Renown ;*

*And*

*And like Stock-jobbing looks  
 For Kings are of a Stamp Divine,  
 And God's own Image bear;  
 Nor should they with their Subjects joyn  
 In Tricking, Shuffling, and Design,  
 Their Rights should never interfere.  
 Let then a certain Prince pursue  
 The Tracks of Cæsar's Fame,  
 And be contented with his due,  
 Without a Venture to Peru,  
 Or Threepence Cent at Am——dm.*

*One that Sh----t in his Hat,  
 and afterwards put it upon  
 his Head.*

**I**N Old King Alfred's happy Reign,  
 When Subjects liv'd at ease;  
 And Men were suffer'd to be plain,  
 And to the Women told their pain;

E

And

And ask'd what e'er they pleas'd.  
 A certain Knight that had a tongue  
 Most prevalently sweet,  
 With something else much better hung,  
 Address'd a Lady that had long  
 Been knowing Nuptial Sheet.  
 Her sleepy Spouse had little done,  
 That *Hymen's* Laws enjoyn'd,  
 And though he had her body won,  
 Neither a Daughter or a Son  
 Was born to win her mind.  
 Madam, said he, the Joys of Life  
 Can ne'er attend a *Bride*,  
 When so divine and fair a Wife,  
 For whom the Gods would be at strife,  
 Has such a Log by her side.  
 Could I but hope, (but hopes are vain,  
 Where Merit does not plead,)  
 So bright an *Angel* to obtain,  
 And the desir'd Possession gain.

I could no Blessing need.  
 I surely should make better use  
 Of Fortunes *GRACE* and Favour,  
 And since the Goddess was profuse  
 In giving, not a moment lose  
 To oblige her in behaviour.  
 There wanted nothing to persuade  
 The fair one to be won;  
 In vain, she summon'd to her aid  
 The Vows she at the *Altar* made,  
 He spoke, and soon the Deed was done,  
 Which made her injur'd Husband try  
 Fit Methods to get rid  
 Of one whose Conscience could defie  
 The Laws and *Sacerdotal* tye;  
 And stain the Marriage bed.  
 Accordingly with much a-doe,

He got him a Divorce,  
 And left his Consort to pursue  
 The Measures which she had in view;  
 And take her wonted course.

When in some time Sir Knight was gain'd,  
 To do the very same  
 Her Husband did whose bed was stain'd,  
 And was with her in Wedlock chain'd  
 To his immortal shame.

At sight of which a stander by  
 Thus lifted up his Voice,  
 Sir J ———, I wish you mighty Joy,  
 And in my Lady M ———, I  
 Congratulate your Choice.

But know that it's as clear as day,  
 And obvious to the sight,  
 That she that could a D ———e betray,  
 And shew a mighty P ———r false Play,  
 Won't stick to abuse a K ———t.

*The MUSICK Prize.*

**A** Crafty Mouse as ever made  
A hole within a Cheese.

For fear his Brethren should upbraid  
His Practice in the thieving Trade,

And ill got Granaries,

Gave out that any Beast i'th' Field,

Of whatsoe'er regard,

That was the most harmonious held,

And in the choice of Notes excell'd,

Should have a great Reward.

The Project took as he design'd,

And went down with the Crowd;

And e'ry Creature prais'd a Mind

So large, and bountifully kind,

And

And so profusely good.

The Bulls and Bears, and Dogs agreed,

With all the deep Mouth'd Race,

To try who would the rest exceed,

And what distinguish'd Tuneful Breed

Would have the Conquerors place.

But when they saw an Ass was made

The Judge of the Dispute,

And the decisive power laid

Within the Breast of one who bray'd,

And was an inharmonious Brute.

Homeward the prudent Creatures came,

Disdainful of the Choice;

And would not trust their Noble Fame

With Animal of such a Name,

And such unskilful Voice.

However,

However, there were some, whose Eyes

Quite dazled at the sight,

O'er-look'd the *Judge* to view the *Prize*,

That gave imaginary Joys,

And fix'd 'em in delight.

Amongst the rest a pert Baboon

Would needs presume to shew

How well he could strike up a Tune,

Which made the Judge of fam'd Renown,

Proclaim the Prize his due.

Ay, said his Lordship, these are Notes

That well deserve our Praise;

Who can refuse that Voice their Votes,

That spight of all its Rivals Throats,

Must carry off the Bays.

'Tis no strange thing a Bull reply'd,

That such a Sentence passes,

And Merit has no Patrons on its side,

Where Advocates for Apes preside,

And those that Judge are Asses,

## M O R A L.

*Let Purcel not think he falls short of our Praise*

*Because that young Welldone is crown'd with the Bays;*

*Nor Eccles ( tho'ts certain his usage is hard,*

*When a Younger in Musick's carress'd and preferr'd )*

*Believe that his Merit's a little the less,*

*Because some great Dons have been out in their guesses;*

*But observe, the return to their pains and their cares,*

*Should be reckon'd the fault of their Judges, not Theirs.*

*The Impeachment.*

**A** Fierce wild Boar that had Transgress'd,  
 And was a *Felon* of a Beast,  
 Once stood Accus'd of having done  
 Things that were hurtful to the Throne ;  
 And detrimental to the Good  
 Of Subjects, sprung from Free-born Blood,  
 And Time was fix'd, and Place prepar'd,  
 To have his Accusations heard ;  
 And see what sort of a Defence,  
 Could be produc'd for Violence.  
 The Court was sate, and Matters laid,  
 As open as they could be made ;  
 And Beast Impeach'd, with all his Art  
 Play'd the Defendant's subtile part ;  
 Pleaded as if 'twas not agreed  
 Before-hand, that he should be freed ;

F

And

And Judge, and Criminal were known  
 Er'e to be of more minds than one.  
 Yet though the Case was very clear,  
 And Articles Attested were,  
 To prove him in a certain Station,  
 Guilty of Male-Administation ;  
 The Boars (for they were Jury) brought  
 Their Brother in *without a Fault.*  
 And undeserving Gaol or Fine,  
 For any Trespass or Design.  
*Thus it falls out, a Greyhound cry'd,*  
*And Justice is mistaken,*  
*When Criminal Boors by Boors are Try'd,*  
*They're sure to save their Bacon.*  
 Statesmen will wink at Statesmens Crimes,  
 To be winck'd at themselves,

*When*

*When they set up to Cheat the Times,*

*And cast us upon Dangers Shelves.*

*Wherefore let other Means be chose,*

*And Methods more severe,*

*What dos't avail we Vote 'em Foes,*

*If P——rs must Judge a P——r?*

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**F I N I S .**

1822

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of the original manuscript  
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